

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
WORKSHOP MEETING--DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY
DECEMBER 9, 2005

ITEM 1

SUBJECT

INFORMATION ONLY - PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EXTERNAL SCIENTIFIC PLANNING AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (SPARC) REGARDING THE SURFACE WATER AMBIENT MONITORING PROGRAM (SWAMP)

DISCUSSION

SWAMP was created in November 2000. SWAMP is envisioned to provide the California Water Boards with comprehensive information on the status of beneficial uses in surface waters. The purpose of SWAMP is to provide a statewide framework for coordination of high quality, consistent, and scientifically defensible methods and strategies to improve water quality monitoring, assessment, and reporting. SWAMP is framed around beneficial use assessment and regulatory responsibilities. To meet federal Clean Water Act objectives, SWAMP should answer the following questions:

1. What is the overall water quality?
2. To what extent is water quality changing over time?
3. What are the problem areas and areas needing protection?
4. What level of protection is needed?
5. How effective are clean water projects and programs?

A triennial external scientific review is part of SWAMP's ongoing programmatic review process. The current review was initiated in October 2005 and preliminary recommendations were made by SPARC at the meeting in Irvin, California. Staff is responding to the initial recommendations. A final report will be available in March 2006 that includes a chapter prepared by State Water Board staff on how SWAMP will response to the external review.

State Water Board staff and the Chair of SPARC will discuss the scientific review and the initial recommendations for improving SWAMP. The State Water Board seeks public comment on SWAMP and the SPARC review. The State Water Board will not make any decision regarding SWAMP at this workshop. Final recommendations from SPARC will be presented at a future State Water Board workshop.

POLICY ISSUE

This is an information item only.